



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

"Battalions" must mean "battles" here. This meaning is not recognized by *N. E. D.* or by *The Stanford Dictionary of Anglicized Words and Phrases*.

2. LAC VIRGINIS. Defined by *N. E. D.* as a cosmetic. This is evidently not the meaning in Jonson's *Alchemist*, Act II, l. 272 :

... F. [designation of a vessel] is come ouer the helme  
too,  
I thanke my Maker, in S. Maries bath  
And shewes *lac Virginis* . . . . ,

or in II, 394, where it occurs in a list of alchemical terms,

Of your *elixir*, your *lac virginis*,  
Your *stone*, your *med' cine*, and your *chrysosperme*.

In both these cases it is evidently a term of alchemy. Both *N. E. D.* and *Stanford Dict.* are wrong in citing from Norton, *Ordinal*, chap. 5 (in Ashmole's *Theat. Chem. Brit.*, 1652, p. 77) the following passage as an occurrence of *lac virginis* = cosmetic. Norton begins, p. 76 :

Manie Liquors be requisit  
To our *Stone* for his appetite.

Then, after citing the opinions of various philosophers as to the proper liquors to use, he says :

Some *Philosophers* said that ye shulde take  
Milke for the Liquor *Elixir* to make :  
And another sort said after their intent,  
No Liquor so good for the Complement,  
As Water of *Litharge* which would not misse,  
With Water of Azot to make *lac virginis*.

*Lac virginis* is evidently either the philosophers' stone itself or a stage in its manufacture. It is at the present time, according to the *Lexicon of the New Sydenham Soc'y*, "Hagendorn's term for the white precipitate formed by adding water to an alcoholic solution of Benzoin." Syd. Soc. further defines: *Lac virginalis* = "Gebir's term for the milky fluid produced by mixing acetate of lead with an alkaline solution;" *Lac virgineum* = "Another term for *acetum philosophicum*;" *Virgins milk* = "The white fluid produced when balsam is mixed with water. Sub-acetate of lead precipitated by water." These are not the alchemical meanings.

In Ruland's *Lexicon Alchemiae*. . . . Francofurti . . . . 1612, is this: "*Lac Virginis* ist *aqua Mercur*. [Ruland says "*Aqua Mercurii* ist der *lapis* zerlassen mit seinem eignen Wasser dass in dem Stein fix ist und läuft weiss wie Wasser] der Drachenschwantz wäschet und *coagulirt* ohn[e] aller Hand werck; ist *Mercurius Philosophorum*, *succus Lunariae* & *Solariae*, aus Catholischer Erd und Wasser." I venture to render

this: "Lac virginis is water of mercury. It is the mercury of the philosophers which washes and coagulates the dragon's tail by its own action. It is the juice of the solar element (gold) and the lunar element (silver). It comes out of the elements earth and water (not common earth and water, but earth and water *generally* understood)." What "Drachenschwantz" refers to I know not. "Dragon" sometimes means mercury, and "dragon's tail" in astrology means the descending node of the moon's orbit with the ecliptic. Neglecting this however we can determine that *lac virginis* is (1) the mercury of the philosophers, called also *azoch*, and referring to mercury as the essential first principle of all metals, the principle of luster and malleability, just as sulphur was the name of the other great principle of changeability; (2) water of mercury.

It also means *acetum philosophorum*, which is thus defined by Ruland: "id est, *lac virginis*, siue *aqua mercurialis*, qua metalla soluuntur, *hydor sophorum*," i. e., *lac virginis* is (3) the solvent for metals. Meanings 2 and 3 lap over, and are hardly distinguishable. H. C. Hart, in his edition of Jonson's *Alchemist*, London, 1904, p. 181, says: "It is a distillation of may-dew and *aqua fortis* in which sublimated mercury is dissolved and putrefied for a month in warm horse-dung," and it "has nothing to do with the fucus prepared from benzoin and alcohol."

One of the greatest difficulties in dealing with alchemy is its lack of definite terminology. *Lac virginis* is one of the most indefinite of all their terms. It should not therefore be omitted from our dictionaries, but should be defined as far as possible. The term did not exist solely to befog the mind, but to denote something which medieval science regarded as existing. I offer this as an attempt toward a definition.

CHARLES M. HATHAWAY, JR.

Columbia University.

THE OLD NORTHUMBRIAN PLURAL IN -eð, -es.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—In his review of Dr. J. D. Rodeffer's dissertation on *The Inflection of the English Present Plural Indicative with special reference to the Northern Dialect* (1903), in *Mod. Lang. Notes*, Vol. xx, p. 55, Professor Alphonso C. Smith mentions Dr. Rodeffer as the first to note the fact that the Old Northumbrian plurals in -eð, -es may have been formed on the analogy of the -eð and -es of the third singular. I take the liberty of pointing out

that, on different occasions, I have advanced the same hypothesis in a more or less categorical form. In my dissertation, *Die Sprache des Rituals von Durham* (Helsingfors, 1890), p. 77, I suggested that the plurals in -eð (*giscineð*, etc.) were "vielleicht eine Analogiebildung nach der 3. Sing." In my article "Über die Verbreitung des sogenannten *u-(o-)*Umlauts in der starken Verbalflexion des Altenglischen" (Herrig's *Archiv*, Vol. 89, p. 143; 1892), on mentioning the plural forms *genimeð*, etc., in the Lindisfarne Gospels, I added: "dabei sind die singularen Endungen zu beachten, welche eine Übertragung der Singularform vermuten lassen." Finally, in my treatment of the language of the Rushworth Gospels in the *Bonner Beiträge zur Anglistik*, Heft x (1901), p. 129, in reference to the plural endings -eð, -es, I used the words: "Es handelt sich hier nicht um eine schwächung des endungsvocals, bezw. um eine übertragung der endung des sing., sondern wie die formen *cymeð*, *cweðeð*, u. s. w., beweisen, um die anwendung der singularformen in pluralischer funktion."

I beg to add that I have not yet read the dissertation of Dr. Rodeffer.

U. LINDELÖF.

*University of Helsingfors, Finland.*

---

#### PROFESSOR BERNAYS' LIBRARY.

*To the Editors of Mod. Lang. Notes.*

SIRS:—The library of Michael Bernays, late professor of German literature at Munich, has recently been presented to the University of Chicago. As Bernays worked entirely from the comparative point of view and specialized in the eighteenth century, his collection, which consists of some nine thousand volumes, is rich in original editions of Goethe, Schiller, Lessing, Wieland, Herder, Haller, Bodmer, Breitinger, etc., etc.; Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, Houdar de la Motte, Marivaux, etc., etc.; Metastasio, Alfieri, Gozzi, etc., etc., and in works on these authors, especially on Goethe and Schiller. The collection further contains many valuable German periodicals of this epoch, e. g., "Discourse der Mählern," "Horen," "Propyläen," "Thalia," also *Musenalmannache*, *Taschenbücher*, etc.

The romantic movement in various countries is represented by editions of Wackenroder, Tieck, the Schlegels, etc.; Chateaubriand, Madame de Staël, Monti, etc., etc.; the "Athenäum," "Europa," etc.

In addition to eighteenth and early nineteenth century material, are found a few important works bearing on the Middle Ages and a consid-

erable number dealing with the seventeenth century, especially in France; furthermore, an important Dante collection, several Petrarch editions, Tasso, Ariosto, etc., etc.

As ancillary to the main collection should be mentioned valuable matter on German philosophy, on political and church-history; moreover, several rarities, as Magnin's "Les Origines du Théâtre moderne," Adelung's "Magazin für die deutsche Sprache," Bayle's "Dictionnaire historique et critique," etc.

CAMILLO VON KLENZE.

*University of Chicago.*

---

#### LUFTKEGEL.

*To the Editors of Mod. Lang. Notes.*

SIRS:—The game of *Luftkegel* (cf. 'Query,' *Mod. L. N.*, vol. xx, p. 126), is played with a set of regulation nine-pins, set up, as in the regular game of nine-pins, with the king at the centre. As I saw the game a year or two ago at Maulbronn, Württemberg, it was played in a garden, the pins being set up on a slab of stone, which had marks to indicate the proper position of the pins. The player stands some ten feet from the pins, while the ball, when at rest, hangs suspended from a point above and between the player and the pins. The length of the rope is such that the ball, when properly swung, can reach all the pins, while it never touches the ground, but gyrates through the air—hence the name. The player has three shots, and the scoring is not by the mere number of pins down, but according to the various more or less difficult combinations which remain—the highest possible score being, if I remember correctly, when the king pin remains alone. I am told that the game, in reduced size, can be had at toy-shops in this country, my informant, however, did not know the English name by which it passed.

W. KURRELMMEYER.

*Johns Hopkins University.*

---

#### CORRECTION.

In the May number of this journal, page 135, second column, second paragraph, read: The *Biographia Dramatica* records under "Narcissus" only the translation of the comedy of J. J. Rousseau, which is obviously out of the question, etc.